



Raleigh

MEMO

TO: City Manager Ruffin Hall

FROM: Chief Cassandra Deck-Brown

DEPARTMENT: Police

DATE: May 10, 2019

SUBJECT: **POST COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP: BODY WORN CAMERA
ACTIVATION**

In response to the request from Councilor Stewart during the Raleigh City Council Meeting held on May 7, 2019, this memorandum will provide some additional information regarding the body worn camera (BWC) device being activated and turned on during every call. As we are in the second of three phases of the implementation of the BWC project, the Raleigh Police Department (RPD) is always seeking and identifying best practices for the deployment of our resources, personnel and equipment. Although the investigation into the officer-involved shooting that occurred on Saturday, April 20, 2019, is ongoing, we re-examined features that could enhance the utility of the camera device in the event the camera is not activated by the officer. During this most recent evaluation, the RPD considered three possible alternative recording solutions as a means of preventing the human error of not turning the camera on:

1) To record everything all the time would be cost prohibitive regardless of cloud or on-site storage. The volume of data currently being stored under the current practice is significant. Additionally, this volume of data would make providing discovery in criminal cases virtually impossible as there would be no delineation between calls for service or cases.

2) The second alternative is to ensure that cameras are turned on automatically which would reduce the potential for human error of failing to turn them on during critical situations. Currently, our BWC system automatically records when:

- a) it is synced with a dash camera and the patrol vehicle's blue lights are activated,
- b) the patrol vehicle is involved in a collision, or
- c) when the patrol vehicle's speed exceeds 75 miles per hour.

3) The third option is activation of the "Record-After-The-Fact" (RATF) feature of the current body worn camera system. Essentially, the camera is passively recording video images (no audio) even if due to human error, the camera recording switch is not activated.

A benefit of RATF will be the ability to capture activity using any tool the officer has available (i.e., hands, baton, pepper spray, etc.) because the camera would always be passively recording. While video is captured, audio is not available

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with this feature. RATF will be limited in the range of recorded time available based on the allotted storage time that has already been used and what remains available on that particular device.

Alternative Solution #3 was selected and mandated on April 26, 2019, as a special memorandum, which was effective immediately. The memorandum will be written into the current Departmental Operating Instruction (DOI) 1109-18: Body Worn Cameras and Mobile Video Recording. This policy clearly lays out the mandates regarding the use and activation of the camera. A copy of the Special Memorandum is attached.

During my presentation to the City Council in 2016, I referenced the significance of this technology and its application. It is important to recognize that the newness of this technology does and will evolve as new developments occur. However, we cannot expect it to be the “be all-end all” solution to prevent all human errors or technical difficulties-and they will happen.

We will experience nuances of this technology that were not originally considered at the time of solicitation of proposals. As such, this continued technological evolution will prompt us to adapt accordingly. We have a robust camera system. It is important to note that while errors will and do happen, we successfully capture an average of 82 hours of BWC video and 68 hours of in-car video per day without error.

We must also remember that we are still implementing a 3 year rollout. Not all cameras have been deployed and not all officers are currently wearing cameras. As noted throughout the various presentations, this was projected to be a mammoth project, which began with a significant level of collaboration between the police department and other city departments, along with 18 months of community engagement. The amount of federal funding supporting this project demonstrates significant effort to model a best practice. The Raleigh Police Department always strives to be the best in what we do while learning from those human errors or technical difficulties that may occur with advancing technology.

To address the second part of Councilor Steward’s inquiry regarding a list of training for equipping police officers with ways to respond to mental health crises, I will forward additional information via the next Manager’s Update.

Attachment 1: Special Memorandum for Update to RPD DOI 1109-18 dated April 25, 2019